

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Justice Is Haven for GOP Losers

By Jack Anderson

Attorney General John Mitchell, the Nixon administration's Mr. Law and Order, has adopted a double legal standard for administering justice.

He has ordered criminal investigations of a dozen prominent Democrats, most of them for election irregularities. Yet at one staff meeting, say insiders, he brusquely shrugged off a suggestion that, for appearances' sake, he should include at least one Republican.

The fact is that more election violations have been referred to the Justice Department against Republicans than Democrats. An alleged violator not referred to Justice is Assistant Attorney General William D. Ruckelshaus, who ran an unsuccessful race for the Senate against Senator Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) last year.

Ruckelshaus apparently violated the Federal Corrupt Practices Act when he filed his campaign financial report more than a month late. But instead of prosecuting him, Mitchell gave him a top job in the Justice Department.

Even more blatant violations were committed by several of President Nixon's fund-raising committees, which also delayed filing their lists of contributors until after the election. As Mr. Nixon's

former campaign manager, Mitchell himself might be implicated.

Partisan Justice

Although these cases were forwarded to the Justice Department for prosecution, he has ignored them.

In fairness to Mitchell, the Corrupt Practices Act is largely obsolete and is honored more in the breach than the observance. With dozens of possible prosecutions to choose from, however, he is going after Democrats only.

His first victim, former Senator Dan Brewster (D-Md.) has already been indicted for accepting illegal campaign contributions from Spiegel, Inc., the giant mail order house. At least three other Democrats—Senator Vance Hartke of Indiana, Rep. Arnold Olsen of Montana and ex-Rep. James Morrison of Louisiana—have been caught up in the same investigation.

Still other Democrats have learned that the Justice Department is probing their campaign accounts.

It was expected that Mitchell, a former law partner of President Nixon's when both were members of an affluent Wall Street firm, would be offered a high post as his reward for running Nixon's presidential campaign. But his appointment of political parti-

sans to run the Justice Department's key divisions is a departure from past practice.

Political Roll Call

His deputy, Richard Kleindienst, directed field operations in the 1968 Nixon campaign, and performed the same service for Barry Goldwater in 1964. Kleindienst also ran unsuccessfully in 1964 for governor of Arizona. Between campaigns, he was counsel for the Republican National Committee.

Will Wilson, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division, ran as a Democrat for senator and governor in Texas. After being rejected by the voters, he became a Republican and campaigned hard for Mr. Nixon in 1968.

Jerris Leonard, chief of the Civil Rights Division, came to the Justice Department after losing a Senate race last year against Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.). The division is headed by Ruckelshaus, another political loser.

Mitchell's special assistant, Kevin Phillips, was the GOP expert on ethnic voting trends during the presidential campaign. He is better known now as author of "The Emerging Republican Majority," a book which sets forth the controversial "Southern strategy."

Then there's Richard Velde, son of Harold Velde, the for-

mer rootin' tootin' House Un-American Activities chairman. The younger Velde came to the Justice Department from the office of Senator Roman Hruska (R-Neb.) and is remembered as an outspoken champion of the National Rifle Association against gun controls. Now Velde is supposed to help enforce the gun control laws.

Morgenthau Not Alone

Robert Morgenthau isn't the only U.S. attorney who didn't resign after the Republican takeover. The U.S. attorneys for both the Eastern and Western districts of Texas—Richard Hardee, a nephew of Sen. Ralph Yarborough, and Eldon Mahon, a nephew of Rep. George Mahon—are determined to serve out their terms.

Sen. Yarborough has served notice upon the Justice Department that he will block any attempt to oust them. Under the Senate courtesy system, Judiciary Chairman James Eastland has pledged never to clear an appointee without a blue slip signed by both senators from the appointee's home state. Yarborough has made it clear he won't sign the blue slip for anyone who is nominated to replace his nephew or Rep. Mahon's nephew.

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